

I am against FCC imposition of rules requiring the implementation of what are euphemistically called "copyright control" measures with regard to the broadcast flag of HDTV broadcasts. This regulation serves no public good. Such measures *may* benefit sectors of the entertainment industry (there's no evidence of that being true), but it explicitly interferes (preempts) the consumer's right to fair use with regard to viewing, storing, and replaying HDTV content.

Further, it's unreasonable to believe that the technology will function properly or be non-circumventable. The effort to initially implement the technology required by such a rule, validate the implementation, add the materials to enforce it, and the iterations of modifying the HDTV standard and supporting technology in an effort to out-pace the consumers that learn to circumvent it will result in high costs for industry, consumers, and those attempting to enforce the regulation. There is ample evidence that this type of feature not only does not work, but alienates the consumer, introduces avenues for failure and incompatibilities in devices, and prevents entry to market of independent media providers. This is currently being born out in the music sector, where the RIAA has degraded to issuing its own subpoenas and seizing computers of people without due process -- raiding music stores and seizing content distributed by independent artists, and even bringing lawsuits against sites that compete with the RIAA by distributing digital music by non-RIAA contracted independent artists.

Lest we forget history, Thomas Edison attempted to monopolize the motion picture industry (which he created) using the same legal approaches and even purchasing governmental support for his agenda in the form of favorable legislation and regulation. Thomas Edison ultimately lost all his investment, all associated patents were over-turned, and the government eventually broke down and gave the motion picture industry back to the independent producers and the American people. The cost of that debacle, to everyone involved, was enormous by today's standards.

Seeing that history repeats itself and actively endorsing the idea that HDTV is a boondoggle by taking on rules that, on behalf of a small part of the entertainment industry establishment, screw the consumer at large and introduce annoyances and incompatibilities into a format is the most certain way to torpedo the format. Are we really going to need to go through a decade of people swearing at their TVs and writing their congressmen before the FCC is ready to accept this as a ill-formed idea?